ABSTRACT

A gateway for screening packets transferred over a network. The gateway includes a plurality of network interfaces, a memory and a memory controller. Each network interface receives and forwards messages from a network through the gateway. The memory

5   temporarily stores packets received from a network. The memory controller couples each of the network interfaces·and is configured to coordinate the transfer of received packets to and from the memory using a memory bus. The gateway includes a firewall engine coupled to the memory bus. The firewall engine is operable to retrieve packets from the memory and screen each packet prior to forwarding a given packet through the gateway and out an

10   appropriate network interface. A local bus is coupled between the firewall engine and the memory providing a second path for retrieving packets from memory when the memory bus is busy.

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